

Message from the President of ESP

Dear members and partners of the ESP,

We are looking back on a highly successful European Congress of Pathology (ECP) 2024 in Florence. Almost 6000 participants made it the biggest Pathology congress worldwide and an event not to miss. 30% increase in participation and highly positive, encouraging feedback show, that our ECP concept – high quality research and training at affordable conditions in presence on site – points to the right direction. The sessions were well attended, and the programme went smoothly; Florence and our Italian friends were fantastic hosts and the Fortezza da Basso was an ideally located, spacious and highly functional congress venue. That we could welcome our 5000th ESP member during the congress was truly an 'icing on the cake'. This deserves a huge 'thank you' to all who have contributed!

There were several positive developments that we could recognise around the congress:

It was fantastic to see so many junior Pathologists attending the sessions, presenting their research and getting together. The ESP is proud of its high junior membership rate, and we are strongly committed to becoming even more attractive to young pathologists with low fees (juniors actually enjoy free membership), specifically designated programme topics, our alumni programme and many support measures, but also with the many junior and educational activities beyond ECP over the whole year.

Along our key innovative topics – molecular pathology and digital pathology - the programme and sessions addressing e.g. clinical trials, tumour classification, ASCO for pathologists showed a rising interdisciplinarity of ECP and our Society. This is mirrored by our growing interaction with clinical societies, which will help to position pathology and Pathologist better in the medical field, just to mention clinical guidelines and joint health care activities.

We were happy to welcome again a rising number of colleagues from abroad, especially Eastern Asia and America – another sign of the increasing attractiveness of ECP. Many of their feedback emphasized the high quality of the presentations, excellent organisation and the very good 'value for time and money' ratio. This is accompanied by new and promising partnerships with Eastern Asian societies, which reflects the growing global visibility and impact of ESP.

Pathology is a technically primed and innovative discipline and needs a prime interaction with industry to reach its goals, to provide the best possible service to our partners and patients and to perform innovative research. Beyond our well-established contacts to diagnostic industry, there is a dramatically rising interest from the pharmaceutical industry due to our impact in predictive molecular tumour analyses as well as from companies in the IT and bioinformatics field due to the rise of Computational Pathology addressing the rising methodical and diagnostic spectrum of Pathology.

As presented in our General Assembly, ESP is not only a solid Society in good standing; we have set the sails to the future – the strategic concept 'ESP2030' has been completed and will help to guide us in our different activities to allocate the necessary resources and to provide the best service to our members. With our new head office in Brussels, the significant increase of staff strengthening our Society and now our own highly skilled event management team we are ready to further increase our educational and meeting activities and interactions with our partner societies.

This success is an incentive and a responsibility for the years to come. Stay tuned for many more new activities and high-class educational programmes and of course our next ECP 2025 in Vienna.

Best wishes from your President

Prof. Peter Schirmacher

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